

THE PROBLEM OF HEMISPHERIC SYNCHRONIZATION

Over the years, much has been said about Hemi-Sync® and hemispheric brainwave synchronization. Whenever there is talk of hemispheric synchronization, its purported benefits, or its uniqueness, we (at Monroe Products & TMI) *lean forward* a little bit and again hear the phonetics of the patented and trademarked expression Hemi-Sync.

Zealous advocates of Hemi-Sync (including me) thought and said (notice the past-tense verbs) that Hemi-Sync stimulated or otherwise encouraged brainwave synchronization between the cortical hemispheres. In truth, there is no evidence of this. Since the Federal Trade Commission regulates our industry, truth in advertising becomes an issue here. For the last several years I have been gently trying to encourage the careful review of published literature, booklets, brochures, and advertising copy at both Monroe Products & TMI.

Bob Monroe himself never said that Hemi-Sync would synchronize your left and right brain hemispheres. (Below I quote his exact words taken from the tape *The Way of Hemi-Sync*.) It would appear that as the organization grew from a “family business” in the late 1970s into what is now a worldwide multimillion-dollar industry, many people got their *fingers in the pie*, so to speak. (My fingers are sticky too.) During this growth process, well-meaning authors (at Monroe Products & TMI) got on the left-right hemisphere bandwagon following the trail of a popular book, *Drawing on the Right Side of Your Brain*. Inappropriately, Bob let this happen, thinking that what was being said about Hemi-Sync being able to synchronize your brain sounded good and maybe it would sell some tapes and programs. At the time, I do not think Bob knew the full implications, the tremendous influence his life, his books, and Monroe Products & TMI would have on the world.

So where does the name Hemi-Sync come from if it does not mean that it synchronizes left and right cortical hemispheres? Apparently, Bob came up with the name based on his understanding of binaural beats. In order to hear the beating, your right and left olivary nuclei (audio-processing centers in the two hemispheres of the brain) work together or in-sync with each other. In Bob's words, “It is a pattern [the binaural beat] synthesized by the coordination of the right and left hemispheres of your brain. Hemi-Sync, or hemispheric synchronization.” Note that Bob does not say that Hemi-Sync causes synchronization but is the result of coordination between the right and left hemispheres of your brain. “Right and left hemispheres” is a bit misleading because the unsophisticated reader assumes *cortical hemispheres* when, in fact, it is the coordination of the audio-processing centers only that enables the sensation of binaural beating.